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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/601,442	10/13/2000	John James Todd	136.004	3672

7590 10/23/2002
Law Office Of Jerome D Jackson
211 North Union Street Suite 100
Alexandria, VA 22314

EXAMINER

CINTINS, IVARS C

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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1724

DATE MAILED: 10/23/2002

12

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.
09/601,442

Applicant(s)
Todd et al.

Examiner
Ivars Cintins

Art Unit
1724



-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136 (a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on Jul 17, 2002.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11; 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1, 7, and 9-11 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above, claim(s) 7 and 9-11 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claims _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgement is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some* c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
*See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgement is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e).
a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgement is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s). _____ 6) ☐ Other: _____

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Applicant's election of Group I, claim 1, in Paper No. 11 is acknowledged. Because Applicant did not distinctly and specifically point out the supposed errors in the restriction requirement, the election has been treated as an election without traverse (MPEP § 818.03(a)). Claims 7 and 9-11 are withdrawn from further consideration, as being directed to non-elected inventions.

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claim 1 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Capdeville et al. (U.S. Patent No. 4,915,884) in view of WO 96/25367. Capdeville et al. discloses forming a loose particulate material by incorporating grains of a water soluble mineral salt (see col. 4, line 21) in a plastic matrix such that the water soluble mineral salt is both embedded in the plastic matrix (i.e. substantially unexposed at the plastic matrix surface) and distributed on the surface of the plastic matrix (see Fig. 1; and col. 6, lines 43-45). The resulting

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composite material is then treated by dissolving the water soluble mineral salt from the surface of the plastic matrix, thereby producing concavities on this surface (see Fig. 2; and col. 6, lines 51-56), which concavities are capable of providing a habitat for microorganisms (col. 1, lines 10-11). This reference further discloses (col. 5, line 17) that the resultant particles can have an average density of approximately 1 g/cc. Accordingly, this primary reference discloses the claimed invention with the exception of the use of sodium chloride as the water soluble mineral salt. WO 96/25367 discloses a similar process for producing a particulate material for use in wastewater treatment, and teaches using sodium chloride (see page 8, line 19) as a water soluble salt for forming concavities in a plastic matrix (see page 12, line 36 through page 13, line 1). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to substitute the sodium chloride of the secondary reference for the water soluble mineral salt (e.g. calcium chloride, sodium bicarbonate, etc.) of the primary reference, since this secondary reference sodium chloride is capable of being dissolved to form surface concavities in a plastic matrix in substantially the same manner as the water soluble mineral salt of the primary reference, to produce substantially the same results.

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Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to I. Cintins whose telephone number is (703) 308-3840. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Friday from 8:30 AM to 5:00 PM. If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Mr. David Simmons, can be reached at (703) 308-1972.

The fax phone numbers for this art unit are: (703) 872-9311 for "Official" faxes after Final Rejection; (703) 872-9310 for all other "Official" faxes; and (703) 872-9492 for "Draft" and other "Unofficial" faxes.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application should be directed to the Group receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-0661.


Ivars C. Cintins
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 1724

I. Cintins
October 18, 2002